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way is very objectionable, causing undue haste one day and loss of time the next.

The introductory chapter on pronunciation gives as accurate indications of French sounds as is possible when comparison is being made with English sounds; some of the English sound-equivalents are very happily selected. On the other hand the treatment of the vowel *e* (*é, è, ê*) does not appear to one clear. One is inclined also to object to such statements as: "Nasalized *i* is represented by *in, im, yn, ym, ain, aim,*" etc.

Some excellent ideas have been applied by the author in his handling of details of French grammar. This is true particularly of the verb. The division of verbs, for example, into two regular conjugations and the irregular verbs appears a good plan. However, I believe that the treatment of some of the tenses has been put off too late: the future tense is not presented until nearly four-fifths of the grammar has been covered.

The exercises are very complete and well balanced; it is a pity that this important feature should be spoiled by the extreme length of the lessons.

On the whole the grammar is disappointing. In spite of several excellent and original qualities, I fear that in practice, in the high school or college, it would be found confusing and impractical.—O. T.

VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION. By Rufus W. Stimson, with introduction by Paul H. Hanus. Pages xi + 468. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1919.

This book was prepared as a contribution to the study of vocational education, to supply the increasing demand for information on the subject of supervised agriculture in the school, and to outline the home project plan so as to meet the requirements of the Smith-Hughes Act that provision be made for at least six months of supervised practice in agriculture each year, for all those schools which seek federal aid under this act for instruction in vocational agriculture. The entire book is built around the home project plan with numerous examples in both plant and animal projects, and should be of great service as a text, reference book, or guide to students and teachers of vocational agriculture and as a suggestive aid to those preparing to teach this new and important subject. As a correlating agency the book could be made helpful also to teachers of high school science and mathematics.

Chapters on the project study *versus* the subject study, on the home-project school *versus* the "self-contained" school, on vegetable growing project study, all thoughtfully prepared and illustrated, are among

the interesting features of the book. The suggestions to supervisors, superintendents, directors, and vocational agricultural instructors are practical and to the point. The example of a state agricultural project study bibliography (in Chapter V) is very suggestive to students of the general subject of vocational agricultural education.

This book is more or less a pioneer on the somewhat new but vital subject which federal aid has given prominence to during the past two years. But it will doubtless fill an immediate need and have a wide circulation.—E. W. K.

ELEMENTARY BIOLOGY, AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SCIENCE OF LIFE. By Benjamin C. Gruenberg. Pages v + 528. Ginn and Company, Boston, New York, Chicago.

The material, plan and method of this book are the results of seventeen years of work which the author has given to teaching science to adults and adolescents, and represent, in his opinion, "the kind of knowledge and the kind of attitude that are both wanted and needed, and the kind that it is desirable, from a social point of view, that all our citizens should acquire sooner or later." The book could, therefore, be called "a social biology."

In at least two particulars the book shows very suggestive differences from most volumes on the subject. In the first place, it avoids the specialists' arbitrary divisions of biology into botany, zoology, etc., which seem "to confuse rather than to illumine," and undertakes to emphasize what animals and plants *do* instead of defining and describing, and analyzing the different kinds of organisms that animals and plants *are*. This would seem to be a sound method of presenting biology or indeed almost any experimental science. The other difference which the book reveals when compared with other treatments of the subject naturally grows out of the difference just noted, and is found in the emphasis given to those common, everyday phenomena and changes which need to be understood and controlled, and to those problems whose proper solution promotes human well being.

The volume is divided into six parts as follows: "The World in Which We Live"; "Life Processes of the Organism"; "The Continuity of Life"; "Hereditarity and Evolution"; "Man and Other Organisms." Some of the interesting topics considered are: health and food standards, food requirements, and food habits; stimulants, narcotics, and poisons; alcohol and health, and alcohol and society; ventilation, and contaminated air; first aid; hygiene of the circulatory system, of excretion, of the eyes; habit; reproduction

in animals; infancy and parental care; bacteria and health; heredity, and the application of the principles of heredity, evolution, and applications and theories of evolution.

In the main the book is written in easy language with a minimum of technical words and phrases. It contains a wealth of information which every good citizen needs.—E. W. K.

SOME PLAIN TALK

(Concluded from page 16)

aspirations. The taxpayers and the school trustee assume the truth of this and act upon it.

Even the late crop of "teachers' colleges" and "schools of education" does not contribute vigorously to a spirit of progress and the advancement of learning. These institutions love pedagogy and pursue it, sometimes to the exclusion of other good things. They are magnifying the teaching process to the detriment of the learning process. Teaching skill

is refined to the point where the child is *taught* everything so skillfully that he *learns* nothing. . . .

The "School of Pedagogy" is concerned with method, rather than with the matter of knowledge, and the product is therefore somewhat pedantic, as might be expected. It mistakes the shadow for the real substance, and it accepts for its standard the mere conceit of learning . . . but the pedagogue wants ever more and more method. The summer sessions of our colleges find the "methods" courses vastly more popular than the informational and cultural courses. The teacher makes her annual pilgrimage to the "seat of learning," not to get learning but to refine the mechanics of method, thus becoming, not more cultivated, but more mechanical in her teaching.

The charlatan with his conceit of learning must give place to the genuine scholar with sound learning. The pedagogue with his pedantry must yield to the simple teacher with rich personal power. The vocationalist must not be admitted with his cash-value doctrine until the ground work of an education has been laid. "Soft pedagogy" must be displaced by a vigorous, self-directed learning process.—E. W. K.

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